Have you ever left a meeting and thought "that was a waste of time?" Has your district ever started down the path of the "new and greatest" fad only to find yourself asking the question … "why!"
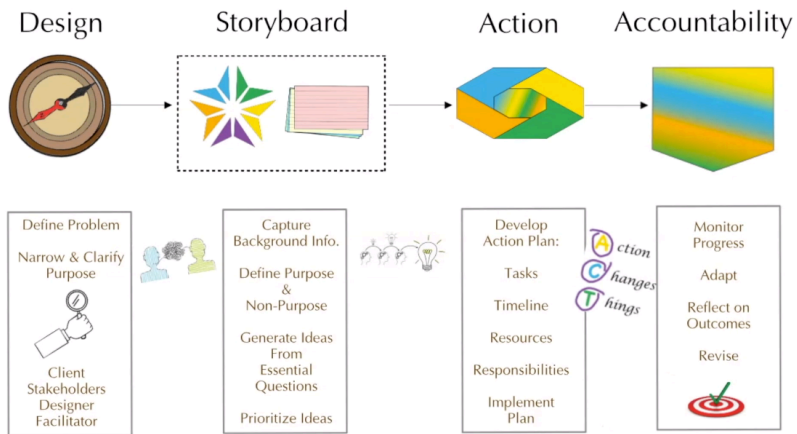
Have you ever thought "that's a great idea, how can we make that happen?" Are there important problems or compelling opportunities that can be capitalized upon to make a real difference for students, staff and the community?
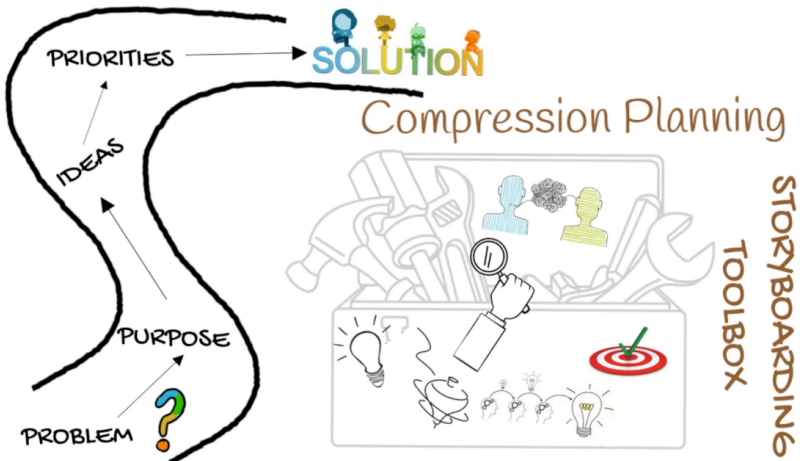
Compression Planning is a great addition to your problem solving toolbox.

Storyboarding is a strategy that clarifies and defines a problem, narrowly focuses your team on a specific purpose, generates ideas, prioritizes and narrows to workable actions, creates an accountability system, and delivers an effective solution.

This team approach can deal with immediate problems or complex, ill-structured problems.

Design	Storyboard	Action	Accountability
Define Problem	Capture Background Info.	Develop Action Plan:	Monitor Progress
Narrow & Clarify Purpose	Define Purpose & Non-Purpose	Tasks	Adapt
	Generate Ideas From Essential Questions	Timeline	Reflect on Outcomes
		Resources	Revise
Client Stakeholders Designer Facilitator	Prioritize Ideas	Responsibilities	
		Implement Plan	

Action Changes Things

Compression planning begins with the design process, proceeds to storyboarding, then taking action, and monitoring progress to ensure accountability.

In the design phase you define the problem, narrow, and clarify the purpose of the project. Involving the right people in the beginning is important for a solid design. A good design sets you up for success.

In storyboarding you quickly review background information, clearly define the purpose and non-purpose of the planning session, generate ideas and prioritize actions. An action plan is developed where tasks, timelines, resources needed, and responsibilities are identified.

Progress is easily monitored . Adapting the plan becomes manageable as changes are needed.

EXPLORE   FOCUS

GUIDELINES

SPIN THOUGHTS TO RICH IDEAS

SUSPEND JUDGEMENT

LISTEN TO EACH OTHER

NO SPEECHES
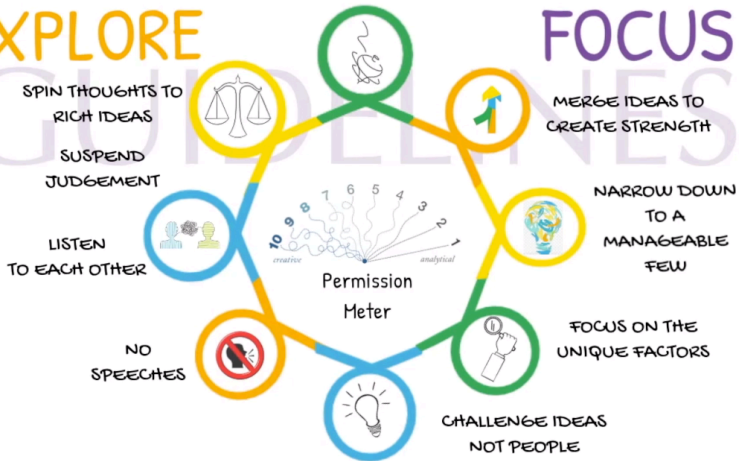
MERGE IDEAS TO CREATE STRENGTH

NARROW DOWN TO A MANAGEABLE FEW

FOCUS ON THE UNIQUE FACTORS

CHALLENGE IDEAS NOT PEOPLE

Permission Meter

The compression planning process has a set of guidelines that promotes exploring ideas, respects diverse points of view, and helps focus on tangible results.

To promote creative thought, Participants are asked to spin thoughts to rich ideas, suspend judgement, listen to each other, and refrain from giving speeches.

Narrowing down ideas will focus on actionable items. Challenge ideas, not people, focus on unique factors, narrow down to a manageable few, and merge ideas to create strength.

A permission meter gives you the latitude to be very creative in your thinking or asks you to be more analytical.

FACILITATOR

A facilitator is key to an effective storyboard session.

The facilitator is not a presenter nor a participant.

A facilitator acts as a moderator of the storyboarding process. The facilitator empowers the team to create, prioritize, organize, analyze, and act in search of effective solutions. Through Compression Planning you can make better decisions faster.
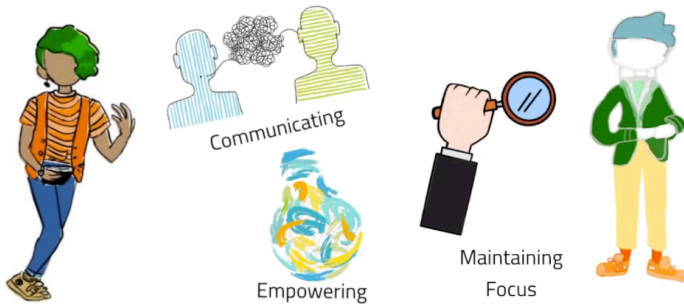
FACILITATOR(S)

Meet Jamie and Jordan, our co-facilitators. It's helpful to have two facilitators. As a team, they can bounce ideas off each other, share responsibilities, and support each other throughout the storyboarding process.
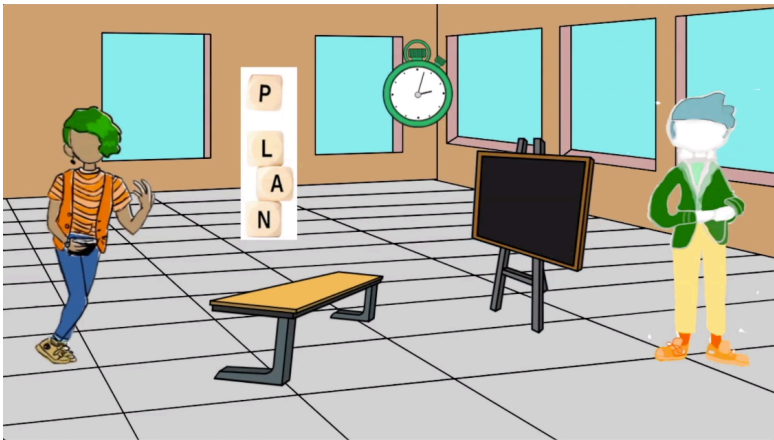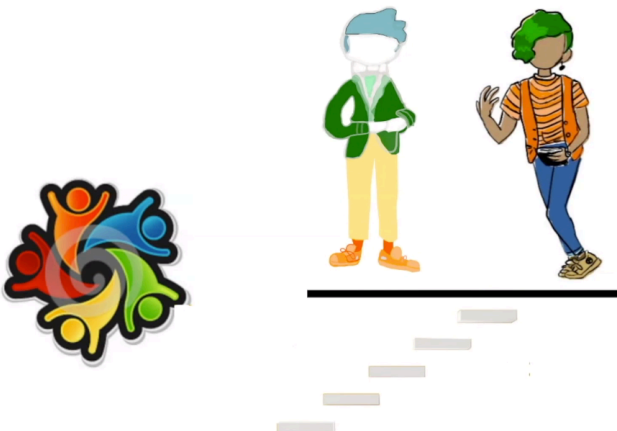
Jamie and Jordan are the planners and organizers of time, resources, and space.

TRUST

Communicating

Empowering

Maintaining Focus

Together they build trust with those participating in the process through effective communication, empowering creative expression, and maintaining a focus on attaining better solutions faster.

Two heads are better than one, especially when they bring complementary strengths to the process. Co-facilitators play to their strengths and make each other look good.

Three Stages of Facilitation

FOLLOW-UP

MODERATING
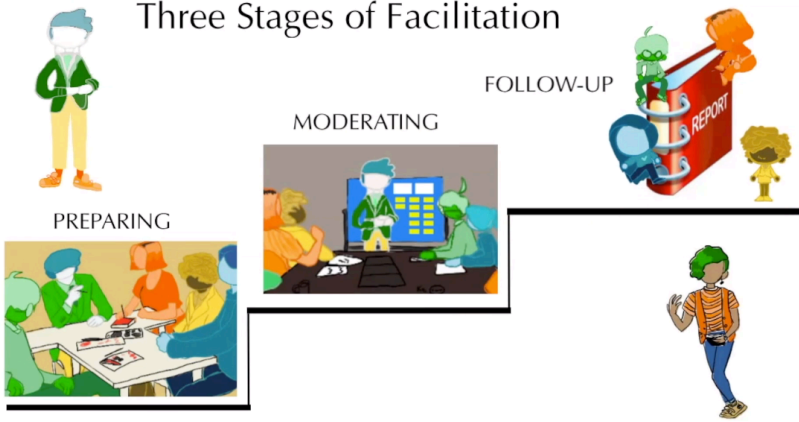
PREPARING

Jamie and Jordan will need to navigate through three stages in the storyboarding process. First is **preparing** for the group processing session. The second stage is, **moderating** the storyboard session, and third, **following-up** to the storyboard session with a summary report and action plan. Let's examine each stage.

PREPARING

Think about how to help others understand the problem, consider background information, explore essential questions, and focus on finding effective solutions.

Clearly define the purpose and non-purpose of the storyboarding session(s).

Revisit storyboarding guidelines to drive to better decisions faster.

Consider who will be on the planning team - expertise and personal connections.

Assemble pertinent background information.

Identify needed resources: time, money, space, technology.

Prioritize ways to build trust and provide for a comfortable environment.

Build systems of communication, electronic and face-to-face.

Jamie and Jordan have a leadership role that is critical. They must:

- Think about how to help others understand the problem, consider background information, explore essential questions, and focus on finding effective solutions.

- Clearly define the purpose and non-purpose of the storyboarding session(s).

- Revisit storyboarding guidelines to drive to better decisions faster.

- Consider who will be on the planning team - expertise and personal connections.

- Assemble pertinent background information.

- Identify needed resources: time, money, space, technology.

- Prioritize ways to build trust and provide for a comfortable environment.

- Build systems of communication, electronic and face-to-face.

TEAM

BREADTH

DEPTH

COLLABORATION
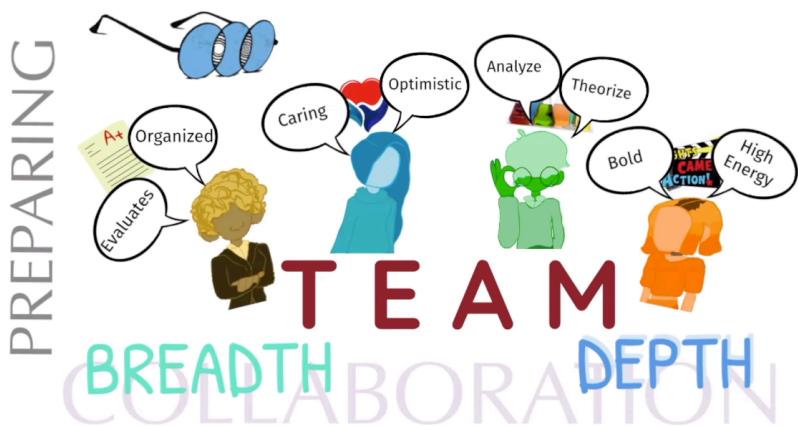
Having the right team makes all the difference. Breadth and depth of knowledge related to the project problem is key.

Facilitators look for the bigger picture. They see through different lenses, recognize that participants bring different points of view to the process, and understand where visions overlap.

Team members put on their thinking caps to apply the depth of their content knowledge and their personal connections to explore solutions.

Chris is a great organizer, manages time well, and evaluates ideas. Jamie and Jordan will appreciate Chris' focus on tasks and timeliness, but will need to bear in mind that Chris can sometimes be quick to judge.

Marley is very caring, nurturing, optimistic, and wants people to get along. Marley's fun-loving nature will help build team, however, emotions often need to be refocused on creating solutions to the problem at hand.
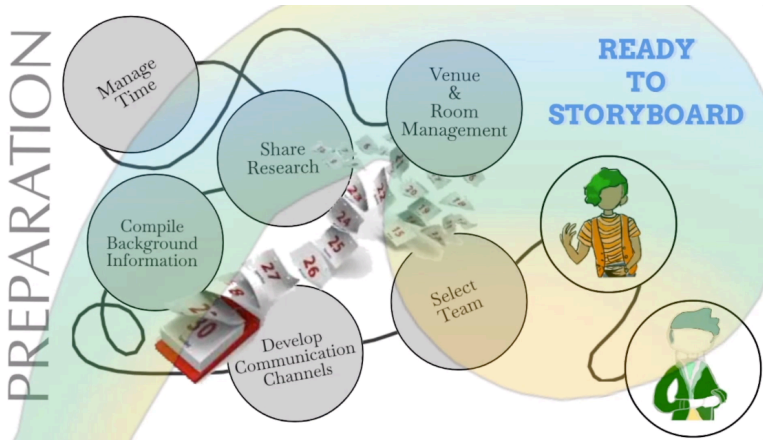
Elliott likes complexity, is always searching for the best answer, and is hard to satisfy. There's always a better way. Jame and Jordan can apply this intellectual curiosity, but will need to help Elliott move to accepting ideas even though they are not perfect.

Alex is bold, action oriented, and high energy. Alex brings spontaneity and enthusiasm. Jamie and Jordan will need to keep Alex focused and on task. There will likely be an ongoing negotiations with Alex regarding process, patience, and responsibilities.

Jamie and Jordan will need to assemble a team of eight to ten people that brings the richness and diversity needed to promote creativity, humanity, and action to attain an effective solution to the problem being addressed.

PREPARING

PURPOSE
EXPECTATIONS
BACKGROUND
RESPONSIBILITIES

TEAM SUCCESS

SOLUTION

Jamie and Jordan are responsible for positioning the team for
success. Team members need to bring an open mind and look at
the problem from different points of view. This will ensure a
robust environmental scan of the problem in relation to existing
conditions. Expectations are clearly explained and the team
gathers background information. Team members need to accept
responsibility for connecting their expertise to the problem at
hand.

PREPARATION

Manage Time

Venue & Room Management

READY TO STORYBOARD

Share Research

Compile Background Information

Select Team

Develop Communication Channels

Facilitators manage the preparation stage. They communicate who is on the team and establish the best communication process among team members. Facilitators ask team members to do necessary research and compile background information. The facilitator creates a centralized online place for team members to share their research.

Prior to the storyboarding session, Jamie and Jordon post a timeline for the team that defines who, why, where, when, and what resources are needed.

Team members confirm on their calendar work sessions and tasks to be completed.

The team is now ready to storyboard.

Three Stages of Facilitation
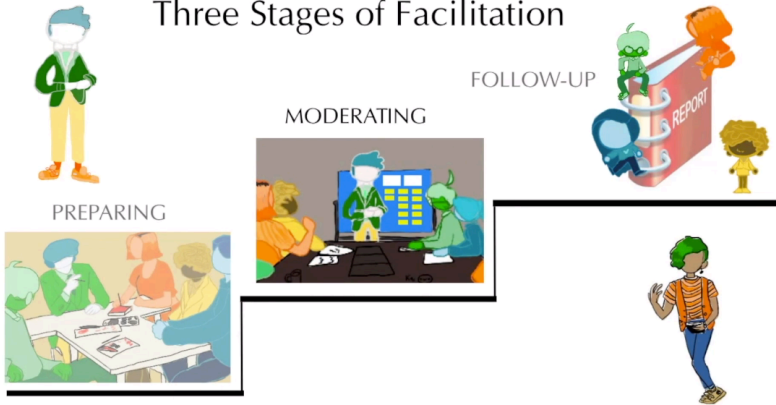
Moderating is the second stage of facilitation.

Advance Organizing for Storyboard Session

MODERATING

Storyboard

Problem Statement

Issue to be addressed

By whom

With what result

SOLUTION

PURPOSE

Focus on problem

Essential Questions

NON-PURPOSE

Keep us from being sidetracked

TRUST

Before the storyboarding session, Jamie and Jordan meet to review the problem statement, the issue to be addressed.

They review the storyboard session's purpose and non-purpose and re-examine the essential questions that will drive the storyboarding session.

Participants roles and personalities are discussed to consider how best to build trust, participation, and honor storyboarding guidelines.

This can take an hour or more of pre-session planning.
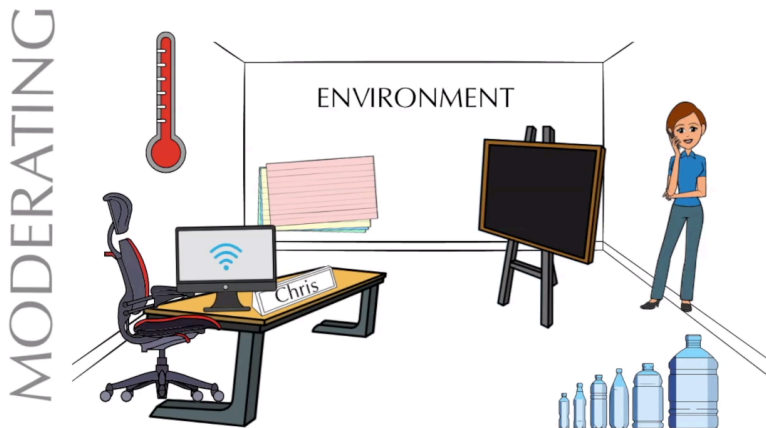
Great consideration is given to the physical layout of tables, nameplates, storyboards, seating arrangement, and materials. Sometimes initial ideas for physical arrangements change once the room is set up.

Creature comforts such as snacks, room temperature, comfortable chairs, restroom availability, coat racks, are ways to show respect for participants and how important they are to the process.

Facilitators check with the person in charge of the room to be used well in advance regarding any special requirements, limitations and technology.

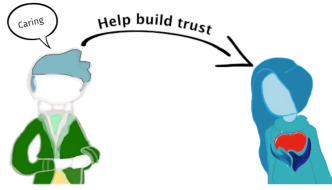It often takes an hour to set up a room after arriving at the location.
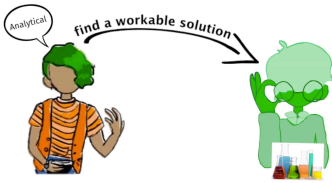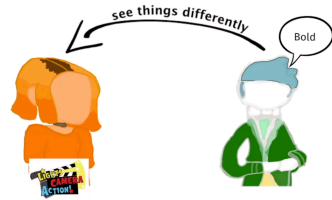
Storyboard Session Begins

MODERATING

Empowering

Amplifying

Participating

SOLUTION

Jamie and Jordan establish facilitator rapport by acknowledging with each individual their talents, experiences and gifts.

They plant seeds as to how each person can apply their talents in the storyboarding experience and reorienting participants toward a successful storyboard process.

This further empowers participants and amplifies their voice. A mind set of participation, leading to action, leading to solutions, begins the moment people walk in the door.
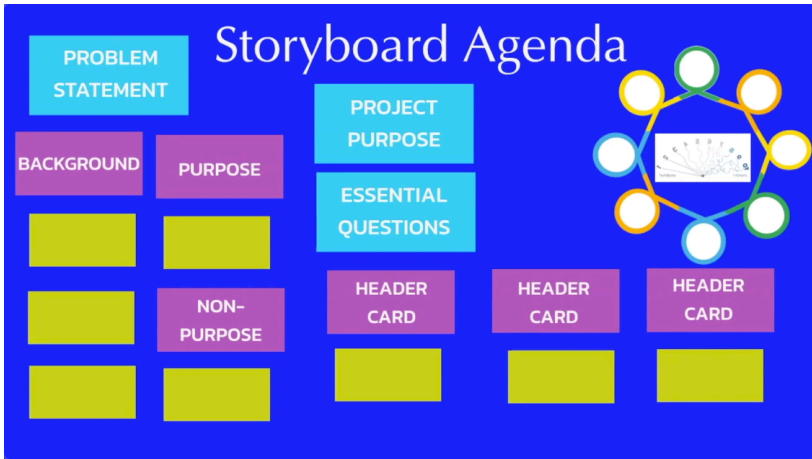
Our agenda for the day is to work through the storyboard components, generate possible solutions to our problem, and determine who, what, where and when we can begin to implement our solutions..

The problem statement identifies the overarching concern. It could be a government mandate, a business challenge, or some internal problem.

The project purpose narrows the problem and provides focus for today's planning session.

In order to understand this problem we need to be aware of the background information, current conditions, and new expectations. This is the time to add any additional background information.

The purpose and non-purpose keep us on track and keep us from complaining and bird walking.

Essential questions drive the brainstorming session.

Header cards address key questions. Your participation as we explore and analyze these questions is essential.

Storyboard guidelines help us honor all ideas, explore and focus. The permission meter allows you to think creatively or be more analytical.

MODERATING

Build Team ... Grow Ideas

Clarify   Listen   Laughter

Communication skills like confirmatory paraphrasing and asking questions at the right time keeps the process moving. A facilitator repeats participant's ideas and asks for clarity if needed. They also know when to be silent and listen.

Humor is a great way to break down barriers and bridge different points of view. Laughter is a great way to build team and suspend judgment. It's OK to have some fun in the process.

Jamie and Jordan will need to define and clarify participants' roles. Importantly, this process only works if everyone is an active participant.

The facilitator assigns someone to write down ideas generated on cards so they can be captured and displayed on the storyboard. It is often helpful to have a recording secretary who is not an active participant serve in this role.

Jamie and Jordan need to keep pacing in mind and manage time effectively. Sometimes it is good to divide the group into smaller groups and use a pair-share strategy to allow for more interpersonal discussion. Then reconvening to the larger group often generates higher-level ideas.

Analyzing - Combining Like Ideas
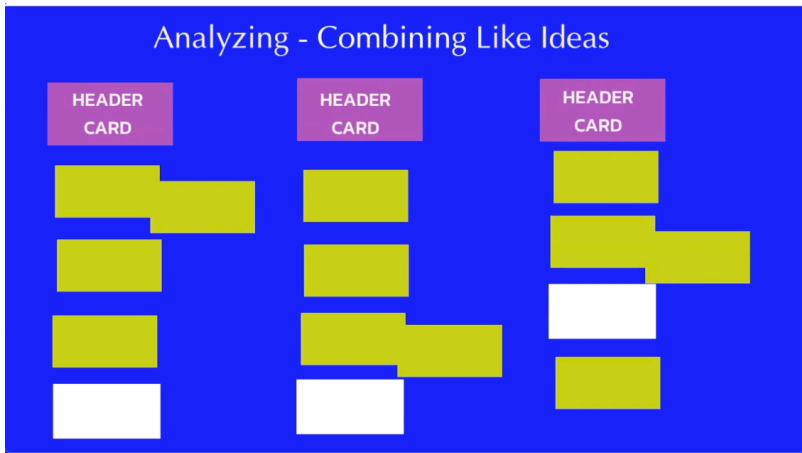
Remember to allow enough time to generate creative ideas and make sure there is time available to analyze and merge ideas to strategies that are actionable.

After ideas are generated, related concept cards are combined. This strengthens ideas and helps you prioritize.

Dotting - Prioritizing
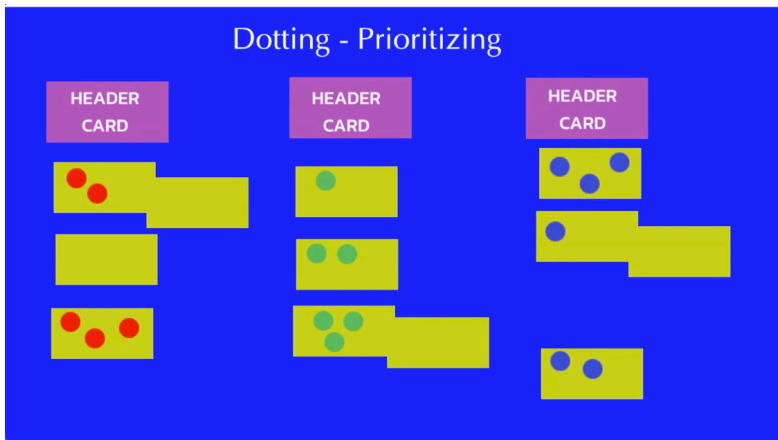
We will use a process called "dotting." You will place stick-on dots onto idea cards with the highest potential to lead to action. Cards with the greatest number of dots represent participants preferences leading to possible action.

MODERATING

SOLUTION

Solutions are not a popularity contest. Focus on the most likely actions that will effectively address the problem.

MODERATING

CONCENSUS

Consensus does not mean unanimous agreement. It does mean participants see themselves as part of the solution; that their voice has been heard; and their concerns have been addressed.

Three Stages of Facilitation

FOLLOW-UP

MODERATING

PREPARING
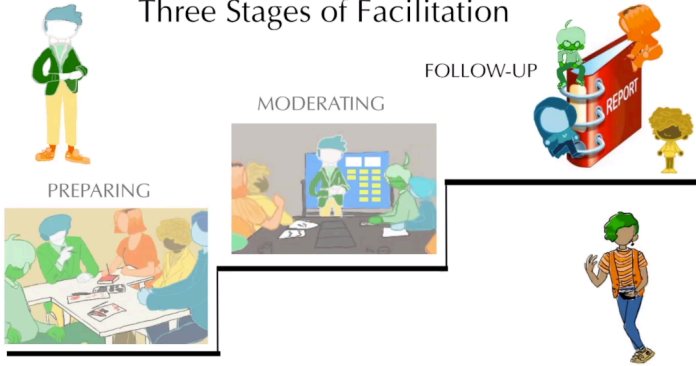
Follow-up is the third stage of facilitation.

Summarize the session's outcomes.

Today, we focused on the problem at hand, took stock of current conditions related to the problem, generated lots of powerful ideas, and narrowed those down to a manageable few."

We developed an action plan that included steps to be taken, who will take responsibility, what resources will be needed, and further questions to be addressed.

And we have identified who the key stakeholders are that will be needed to help us move forward.

Debriefing is very important but often overlooked.

Ask, "What went well, what did we struggle with, what are our next steps."

"What would you like to see as a follow-up to today's work?"

The storyboard is archived for future reference.

Idea cards show the group consensus and provide the basis for a final report.

The action plan
- frames the problem and essential questions,

- identifies participants in the process,

- summarizes ideas, identifies action steps to solution,

- calls attention to additional tasks or considerations, and

- includes an appendix that details the storyboard content.

Three Stages of Facilitation

PREPARING

MODERATING

FOLLOW-UP
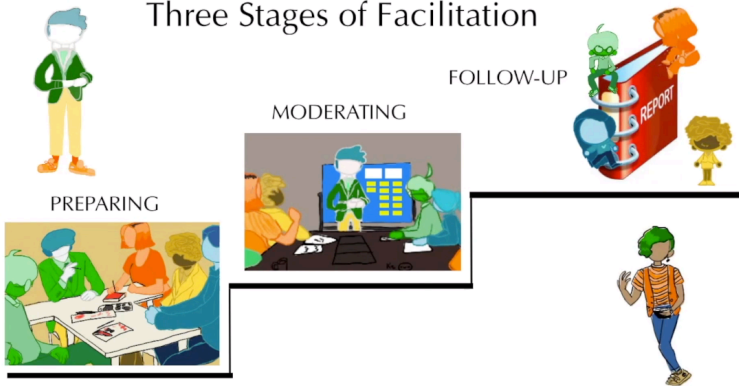
An effective facilitator knows how to navigate through the three stages of facilitation.

Compression Planning

Design

Storyboard
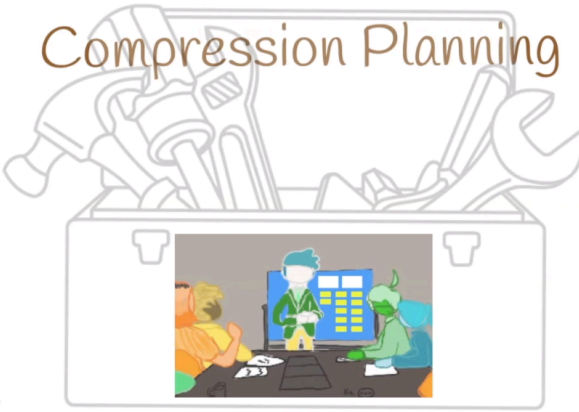
Action

Accountability

FACILITATION

The facilitator is key to a successful storyboarding process.

Having Storyboarding in your compression planning toolbox allows you to translate great ideas into action.

It is a critical component of compression planning along with Design, Action and Accountability.

CREDITS

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